



## Hall and Braithwaite Towers (project X254)

### Question and Answer Sheet

The questions in this Q&A document were raised by residents who attended the meeting held at City of Westminster College on Tuesday 10 September 2019

#### General major works queries

##### Which blocks does the project cover?

The project covers Hall and Braithwaite Towers.

##### Who will carry out the works?

At the start of 2018, we entered into a ten-year partnering contract with two major works contractors. Axis will deliver all major works projects in the north and west of the borough, while United Living will deliver all major works projects in the south and central areas of the borough. Axis will be delivering the works to Hall and Braithwaite Towers.

##### What work is planned to each block?

- Ventilation: replace ventilation equipment on the roof plant room (fans); cleaning of existing ductwork will be carried out (communal and in-flat); new grilles to bathrooms and W.C's to all properties.
- Electrical: install new lighting in ventilation plantrooms; replace the existing trunking or conduit for power and lighting wiring, to contain and protect cables.
- Fire stopping: to any service penetration through a compartment wall, ceiling or floor; to any movement joint; any junction gap between building elements (i.e. at the junction of a floor slab and external cladding or at the junction of an internal block work wall and a floor slab) or where a pipe or section of trunking passes through a compartment wall.
- Fire doors: replacement doors and frames (doorsets) within the communal areas such as electrical intake cupboards; replacement of tenants' front doors, and an opt-in for leaseholders at an additional cost.
- Asbestos: before any work start onsite Axis is required by law to carry out a refurbishment and demolition (R&D) asbestos survey in each area likely to be affected by the works. If any asbestos is identified and needs to be removed, these works will be done by a specialist asbestos removal contractor who are licensed to carry out such work and comply with all Health and Safety Executive requirements.



- Builders work: any making good works including any disturbance of the existing decoration and any other minor building fabric repairs identified during the course of the works.

**How long will the works take?**

We estimate that it may take 19 weeks per block, a total of 38 weeks across the entire project. This is on the basis of opening works to one tower at a time rather than works running concurrently.

**Are you proposing to work on the two blocks at the same time?**

Only one block will be opened up at one time.

**What has been done so far, in advance of the works?**

Axis have carried out numerous surveys on both blocks to get an understanding of what services are behind the grilles. They have also carried out a fire strategy for the ventilation and are now in receipt of the fire report which supports that the installation proposed is fully compliant with requirements.

Fire risk assessment and compartmentation surveys have been carried out within the common areas of both blocks. These surveys have highlighted where fire stopping works and the replacement of doors to be compliant with current regulations are required.

A lighting calculation has been carried out to determine the lighting requirements for everyday and emergency lighting, and an installation scheme has been determined to ensure lights are installed in the correct places.

**Where would the site cabins and contractor's welfare office be located?**

These will be established in an agreed location on the estate. We will consult with you as the project progresses and will arrange a site walkabout with the Resident Association.

**Where will the goods hoist be located?**

The goods hoist will need to be located so as to reduce the distance required to travel with the plant in order to comply with Health and Safety regulations regarding manual handling due to the weight of it. However, residents expressed some concern at the meeting regarding its location and Axis has agreed to discuss this with them prior to any works starting.

**Why are asbestos surveys being carried out by Axis? Can Westminster City Council provide this information in advance of the works?**

No, as current surveys are management surveys only. Before any work start onsite Axis is required by law to carry out a refurbishment and demolition (R&D) asbestos survey in each area likely to be affected by the works. Axis has allowed a provisional sum for this and this will not be touched, if no asbestos work is required.

**Will Axis operatives use in-flat or communal electricity for drilling works?**

No, the operatives will use cordless/ battery operated drills.



## In-flat work queries

### **What is the scope of work within the flats?**

In-flat work and access will be required to every flat for:

- pre-start and asbestos surveys
- the cleaning of the local ductwork
- the installation of, or replacement of, ventilation grilles and fire dampers (specialist devices which seal the duct in the event of a fire to prevent smoke travelling through the building), within all properties, including volume control dampers (VCDs), which ensures air is extracted evenly through the system
- associated builder works including decorative works
- installation of new front entrance doors to tenanted properties (lessee opt-in available)

### **How long will the works take to each property?**

Works may take between two to four days and Axis will provide more accurate timescales at the time of the pre-start survey. These may be split into two separate appointments due to the lead in time for the front entrance doors to be manufactured.

### **What does 'making good' mean especially within lessees' flats?**

This refers to any builder's work required as a direct result of these works, such as making good any disturbance of the existing decoration, such as plastering, replacement of broken tiles etc. Please note that a pre-condition survey of the flats will be carried out before work starts and photos will be taken.

### **Why are the proposed grilles bigger than the existing ones?**

The existing grilles are 80mm diameter with no fire damper installed. Axis will be replacing the grilles with a larger sized intumescent fire block for fire strategy purposes, as they are unable to source fire blocks that will fit within the existing ducting. They have proposed the smallest size available which will still allow compliance with current regulations.

### **Will Axis work in the ductworks behind the toilets where the service pipes run down the building? Will fire stopping/sealing works be carried out in these areas?**

Axis will only work in the areas where ventilation ductwork is present and will not be accessing any other service ductwork or carrying out works to other service pipes during these works.

Compartmentation/ fire stopping is being carried out locally by the installation of the fire dampers within the grille. The intumescent fire block has a complete seal and will be finished off with intumescent mastic. The main duct runs which are concealed behind the wall do not require firestopping/sealing works to be carried out to them.



**Some plumbing work has been carried out in the toilet areas, eg some residents have their own cistern in these areas – will these elements be inspected as part of the pre-start survey?**

During the pre-start surveys Axis will be inspecting the areas in the immediate path of accessing the ventilation grilles and ductwork only. If something will restrict the works, they will discuss this with the resident at the survey and advise of any enabling works required to allow them to carry out our works. However, if there is something of concern due to safety matters within the bathroom, they will refer this to Westminster City Council for follow up action.

**Is it necessary to open up a section of the internal wall to gain access to concealed ductwork to enable internal cleaning of the ducts?**

Ductwork cleaning is being carried out to the main vertical run ductwork from the plant room area where the ventilation plant is located and from other easily accessible areas. When the existing grilles are removed within residents' properties then the local branch of the ductwork will be cleaned from here back to the main vertical runs.

While it is not envisaged that the walls will need to be opened to gain access to any areas during the works, unfortunately it may not be possible to carry out the installation works for the new duct and grilles to all properties without having to open up a section of the wall. Residents will be advised at the earliest opportunity if it is necessary to open up the wall.

**Some toilets do not have removable panels. How will Axis deal with this?**

If a toilet does not have a removable panel Axis will remove the existing grille and inspect the access available to the ductwork. If this is insufficient, they will discuss with the resident how the works will need to be progressed to enable the works to be completed. This may be a situation where the wall will need to be opened up slightly to allow the fire damper to be installed. No opening up works are envisioned to any areas other than where existing grilles are located.

**How long will the pre-start survey take and what will it involve?**

Before any of the work begins, Axis require access to your home to carry out a pre-start survey. To minimise disruption, Axis would carry out the required survey(s) to your property on the same day, wherever possible.

Also, the survey will enable Axis to confirm your contact details and any information that you feel may assist them in the delivery of the work to your home. Your Resident Liaison Officer will be present during the survey and will be able to guide you through the process and answer any questions or address any concerns you may have.

**Front entrance doors queries (FEDs)**

Following feedback from residents and Ward Councillors the front entrance doors for this project will be manufactured by Gerda. Although an alternate manufacturer had been identified by Axis and prices submitted, we have reviewed this with Axis and decided that Gerda provides the best solution for this project. This is based on Gerda doors having a proven record on other major works projects in Westminster.



### **What type of front entrance door is being installed?**

The **FD30S** door will be supplied and installed by Gerda from their Safer Homes Range, Derwent Style. The FD stands for Fire Door, the 30 denotes that the door withstood the blaze for a minimum of 30 minutes while the S means that the doors have been fitted with a smoke seal. The proposed door is a solid, flush timber door which is installed as a set with a new frame. A photo of the door is included on page 8 of this document, alternatively, you can visit Gerda's website via: [www.gerdasecurity.co.uk](http://www.gerdasecurity.co.uk)

### **What the key features?**

- The doors have been tested as a complete doorset; frame and furniture tested, approved and certified.
- A multipoint locking system which provides enhanced security
- All doors will be fitted with door numerals, a door knocker, a door viewer (vision hole), and a letterplate. The letterplate will meet all required security and fire safety standards
- All ironmongery fitted to the doors will have a satin chrome finish
- The doors will be factory finished so will not require decoration once installed
- There is the option of different threshold for ease of mobility

### **What are the fire safety features?**

The front entrance doors have been tested both sides to ensure they comply with building regulations legislation and provide at least 30mins protection before any fire or smoke can pass them. In order to comply with this, the ironmongery of the door is also required to be installed to the doors when they are tested to ensure they cause no failure prior to 30mins.

All FD30 doors are required to have intumescent strips around the frame, an intumescent letter box, and intumescent materials installed around locks and hinges. To comply, door sets are required to be installed threshold will be installed as a complete set.

Axis have received certification from the proposed door manufacturer to certify them as compliant with the required standards. The proposed contractor is a supply and install contractor to ensure that the integrity of the doors is maintained during the install also.

These doors also comply with the security standard 'Secure by Design' (Met Police Incentive) and requested by Westminster Council). This ensures they reach the highest security standards and consist of a triple lock system.

### **Will there be glazing above the fan lights?**

Doors have been proposed to be installed on a like for like basis. Therefore, the small fanlight that currently exists to the FEDs will be maintained with the new installations.

### **Will there be a choice of door designs for residents to choose from?**

No, only colour choices will be made available, the door design will be uniform throughout both blocks.



**What colour choices are available?**

The doors come in:

- Red
- Blue
- Black
- White
- Green

**At what stage can tenants (and leaseholders who choose to opt-in) choose the colour of the front entrance door?**

During the pre-start survey Axis will measure the existing openings and survey the internal side of the door to ensure the correct doorset is ordered from the manufacturer, at this stage residents will be able to choose from five colours.

**The proposed doors, within the communal areas, have less glazing than the existing. Can this be reviewed?**

The glazing options to the communal doors are currently being reviewed. As discussed at the meeting, the amount of glazing that can be installed within these doors is governed by the certification of testing for the proposed doors. This is currently being reviewed jointly by Gerda and Axis, and information will be available as to whether this glazing can be increased further.

**Cost and billing related queries**

**Why is there a price discrepancy for the ventilation works across the two blocks?**

The roof-based ventilation fans are located in slightly different places on both blocks, therefore the duct work from these fans that run through the building are also different. This has meant the work actually involved to replace these fans and maintain the ductwork has a variance in cost.

**What is the cost for the lessee opt-in to the FED?**

We have agreed a fixed price depending on the work that may be required and this will be discussed with individual leaseholders, prior to any works.

Element of work	Cable rerouting	No cable rerouting
1: Supply and Install	£1,290.00	£1,290.00
2: Making Good	£ 50.19	£ 50.19
3: Cable Rerouting	£ 67.00	£ 0.00
4: Sub-total (sum of 1+2+3)	<b>£1,407.19</b>	<b>£1,342.69</b>
5: Design Fee @ 1.5% (of sub-total 4)	£ 21.11	£ 20.14
6: Sub-total (sum of 4+5)	<b>£1,428.30</b>	<b>£1,362.83</b>
7: Overhead @ 3.5% (of sub-total 6)	£ 50.00	£ 47.70
8: Variable Profit @2% (of subtotal 6)	£ 28.57	£ 27.26
9: Total cost (sum of 6+7+8)	<b>£1,506.87</b>	<b>£1,435.11</b>



**Is VAT payable or non-payables for lessees who opt-in to buy a new front entrance door?**

No, VAT is not payable on this.

**Who pays the costs for the front entrance doors installed to tenanted properties?**

Routine day to day expenditure is charged to the Housing Revenue account (HRA) and is defined as income received from tenants as rent. This account is used to offset the costs of the major works, including the installation of doors to tenanted properties.

**Key milestone related queries**

**What are the next steps?**

The next step will be for us to formally begin the Section 20 consultation process with leaseholders.

The Section 20 Notice of Estimate will set out the description and reasons for each aspect of the works. It will detail the project costs and estimated individual leaseholder liabilities. Leaseholders have 37 days to make written observations.

**What is the expected start and end date for the works?**

At this stage we don't know. Once the statutory notice period expires and subject to formal observations, Axis will receive a commencement order which allows them to formally start the pre-construction works process, which involves finalising the Health and Safety Plan and mobilising on site. Once a final programme has been agreed this will be published so that residents are clear on start and finish dates for works to their own block.

Before works start, Axis will write to you to introduce their onsite team and invite you to a **'meet the contractor'** event. This event will be an opportunity to meet the team and ask any questions about the works being carried out to your home.

**More information**

**Can residents opt-in for major works updates via email?**

Yes. If you would like to opt-in for major works via email please contact Amoy Ing via [aing@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:aing@westminster.gov.uk)

Our website is updated regularly with the latest information on major works, including copies of correspondence. The web page address is:

**[www.westminster.gov.uk/yourhousing/x254](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/yourhousing/x254)**

You will be able to view copies of the Service Provider Proposals (SPP) document and presentation on the web page.

If you have any other questions about the planned works, please contact us by:

- Telephone 0800 358 3783 - ask to speak to Amoy Ing in the Property Services Team
- Email [housing.enquiries@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:housing.enquiries@westminster.gov.uk)

